



Longmont's natural setting with its vast open lands, creeks, lakes, and spectacular views is vital to the City's image and identity, its attractiveness to businesses, and its quality of life. Preserving open areas for the use, enjoyment, and well-being of Longmont area residents is key to the community's quality growth and development. The City has categorized these open areas into three types: parks, greenways, and open space.

Parks

Parks are those open lands that the City develops for more intense recreation such as field games, court games, swimming, playgrounds, as well as outdoor recreation such as walking, biking, fishing, and picnicking. Longmont's parks system includes neighborhood, community, and district parks in which the City provides a variety of recreational opportunities.

There can be some overlap in the types of facilities that the City provides in each park type. For example, picnic areas/shelters, restrooms, parking lots, and maintenance buildings could be in all three park types. Other facilities will be more common to one particular park type. For example, lighted athletic complexes and indoor recreational facilities will more likely be in community parks.

Facilities commonly found in **neighborhood parks** include playgrounds, picnic areas/shelters, nonlighted playfields, open play areas for informal games, sport courts, parking lots, and restrooms.

Community parks include facilities such as lighted athletic complexes, indoor recreational facilities, sport court complexes, concession facilities, picnic areas/shelters, playgrounds, open play areas for informal games, parking lots, and restrooms.

District parks commonly include facilities that focus on the attributes or special features of the area which the parks encompass. Typically they include facilities for outdoor recreation such as hiking, fishing, boating, swimming, and wildlife viewing. Trails, swimming areas, boat ramps, picnic areas/shelters, playgrounds, parking lots, and restrooms can be facilities within district parks.

Not every park of the same type will have the same facilities. The City will consider recreational demands of the park's service area, the facilities in nearby parks and school play areas, and the physical attributes of the park site that could foster other activities, such as a fishing pond, in deciding the site-specific facilities for a particular park.

The City periodically evaluates its recreation facilities standards with the goal of providing recreational opportunities to meet the changing desires of Longmont's residents. Together the City's parks system and recreation programs help to meet the diverse recreation interests that Longmont's residents pursue.



Greenways

Greenways are linear open space corridors that permit public access. The purposes of greenways are (1) to provide for the multiple uses of storm drainage corridors, (2) to assist the efficient maintenance of storm drainage corridors, (3) to accommodate trail-oriented recreation, and (4) to connect residential areas to the bikeway network and with community activity areas such as schools and parks. Recreational opportunities along greenways need to be sensitive to the other attributes of the greenways such as natural areas and wildlife habitat.

The City designates **primary greenways** along ditches and creeks that carry urban storm drainage and that can serve as trails for uses such as walking, jogging, biking, and rollerblading. Thus, there are multiple uses and benefits from areas that otherwise could become drainage maintenance problems for the City. Primary greenways, in combination with the bikeway system, connect the City's parks and other community facilities.

The purpose of **secondary greenways**, which are narrow corridors just wide enough to accommodate a bikeway, is to provide necessary, short links from residential neighborhoods to primary greenways, bikeways, parks, and schools so that pedestrians and cyclists have "shortcuts" from their neighborhoods, thus alleviating their need to use streets on the perimeter of their neighborhoods in roundabout routes to their destinations. The *Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan* does not show the location of secondary greenways. The City determines their location when reviewing subdivisions.

Open Space

Open space is land that remains in a relatively natural state or use (including agricultural use) and serves one or more of the following functions: (1) preservation of natural areas and natural resources, (2) provision of outdoor recreation, (3) maintenance of Longmont's separate identity, and (4) preservation or enhancement of the visual quality of entrance corridors to the community.

The City's designation of land as open space does not necessarily imply that it will be accessible to the public or in City ownership. For example, it is possible to have open space as part of private development that also preserves natural areas or enhances the community's visual quality. These areas can remain in private ownership. Therefore, when accessibility to the public is not a prime consideration for preserving open space, the City may consider using preservation techniques besides public dedication and acquisition.



GOAL 29: Provide adequate parks to serve the recreational needs of Longmont residents.

POLICY 29.1: Develop three types of parks – neighborhood parks, community parks, and district parks – to serve the needs of residents.

Strategy 29.11: Using the following criteria, develop at least one neighborhood park within each neighborhood to serve its residents with facilities such as playgrounds, non-lighted playfields, and picnic areas:

- A. Provide 2.5 acres of neighborhood park for each 1,000 residents.
- B. Size each neighborhood park in the range of 10 to 20 acres, depending on the physical attributes of the site, the facilities the City will provide, and the configuration of the adjacent school site's play area.
- C. Locate each neighborhood park to have a service radius of ½ mile.
- D. Locate neighborhood parks adjacent to elementary schools and on collector streets.
- E. Consider the acreage of an adjacent elementary school's developed play area in calculating the size needed for that neighborhood park to determine whether its size can be within the lower end of the acreage range.

Strategy 29.12: Using the following criteria, develop community parks to serve residents of several neighborhoods with improvements such as indoor recreation facilities, lighted athletic complexes, or other facilities that the City cannot functionally provide within neighborhood parks.

- A. Provide 4.5 acres of community park for each 1,000 residents.
- B. Size each community park in the range of 50 to 100 acres depending on the physical attributes of the site and the facilities the City will provide.
- C. Locate each community park to have a service radius of 1 to 1½ miles.
- D. Locate community parks on or near arterials either in nonresidential neighborhoods or on the edge of residential neighborhoods with the intent of minimizing the impact of organized recreational activities on residences.



Strategy 29.13: Using the following criteria, develop district parks to serve the residents of the City and surrounding area with facilities that foster outdoor recreation that takes advantage of the special features of the site:

- A. Size each district park so that it includes sufficient additional area in which to locate the recreational facilities so that they are compatible with the natural features, wildlife, or other qualities that contribute to the district park's natural aspects.
- B. Locate each district park to encompass the specific natural feature that is its focus.
- C. Configure district parks to provide access from arterial or collector streets when feasible.

GOAL 30: Develop a greenway system of linear open space that provides for the multiple uses of storm drainage corridors, assists in their efficient maintenance, accommodates trail-oriented recreation, and connects residential areas to the bikeway network and with community activity areas.

POLICY 30.1: Designate primary greenways along ditches and creeks that carry urban storm drainage when they can integrate with the bikeway system and can connect residential areas with community activity areas.

Strategy 30.11: Evaluate the ditches and creeks that carry urban storm drainage to determine those that would meet the functions of the greenway system.

Strategy 30.12: Locate improvements within the greenways to minimize negative impacts on wildlife habitat and quality vegetation.

POLICY 30.2: Develop secondary greenways, narrow corridors just wide enough to accommodate a bikeway, in residential neighborhoods to provide short links to primary greenways, parks, and schools.

Strategy 30.21: Locate secondary greenways during the subdivision review process in residential development when necessary to connect to primary greenways, bikeways, parks, and schools.



GOAL 31: Preserve the natural features and resources of the Longmont area, maintain the City's separate identity, provide outdoor recreation, and enhance the visual quality of entrance corridors to the City.

POLICY 31.1: Use open space to preserve the natural resources of the Longmont area.

Strategy 31.11: Designate as open space the areas with natural features including, but not limited to, wildlife habitat, rare plant communities, and high-quality lakes, ponds, and streams.

Strategy 31.12: Preserve designated open space within new neighborhoods by appropriate techniques.

Strategy 31.13: Use planned unit development regulations and other appropriate techniques to preserve natural features and to provide open space within developments.

Strategy 31.14: Acquire open space through appropriate methods when the City wants the open space to be accessible to the public or when other strategies for its preservation would not be effective.

Strategy 31.15: Cooperate with other entities and landowners to keep prime farmland within the Municipal Service Area and the Longmont Planning Area under agricultural production, where practical, until development occurs.

POLICY 31.2: Establish and maintain urban-shaping open space buffers in strategic areas surrounding the City to maintain the community's separate identity.

Strategy 31.21: Designate urban shaping open space buffers in strategic locations.

Strategy 31.22: Establish urban-shaping open space buffers through appropriate methods.

Strategy 31.23: Cooperate with other jurisdictions to preserve urban-shaping open space buffers where both Longmont and other communities will benefit.

Strategy 31.24: Cooperate with other entities to develop programs to preserve prime farmland, when possible, in the St. Vrain Valley Planning Area to provide urban-shaping open space buffers.

POLICY 31.3: Preserve high-quality natural resource-based recreational areas that are locally significant.

Strategy 31.31: Designate and acquire open space areas with existing or potential recreational features as district parks.



POLICY 31.4: Establish, preserve, and enhance scenic entrance corridors along major highways entering the City.

Strategy 31.41: Designate scenic entrance corridors.

Strategy 31.42: Implement scenic entrance corridors through techniques such as landscaping, limited access, increased setbacks, and sign regulations.

Strategy 31.43: Modify development regulations in order to implement methods to develop scenic entrance corridors.

Strategy 31.44: Coordinate with other jurisdictions in implementing scenic entrance corridors.

POLICY 31.5: Adopt and implement an open space plan and management program.

Strategy 31.51: Detail an open space plan and management program that defines and prioritizes open space parcels for preservation and/or for acquisition, that outlines methods appropriate for either approach, that identifies available resources, and that establishes land management policies and procedures.

Strategy 31.52: Designate the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to advise City Council on the preservation, acquisition, and management of open space.

POLICY 31.6: Cooperate with other agencies and with landowners in acquiring open space when the City wants public access to the areas or when other preservation techniques are not effective.

Strategy 31.61: Cooperate with other agencies and with landowners to acquire open space designated in the *St. Vrain Greenway Master Plan* as within the boundaries of the St. Vrain Greenway.

Strategy 31.62: Cooperate with other jurisdictions to designate and acquire open space.

Strategy 31.63: Contact other open space and conservation organizations for assistance with acquiring open space.